are there. But the Pakistan Government so far has not admitted. But we are pursuing and giving them all the details.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Sir, the Minister said that according to our figure, 850 Indian nationals are in Pakistan jails. There is some contradiction. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that out of these 850 Indian nationals, how many have entered Pakistan with valid passports and how many are intruders into Pakistan without any passport. I would like to know whether the Government has got any information about it. Secondly, Sir, May I know whether, in the course of the last talks between our Minister and his counterpart in Pakistan, there was any discussion about the repatriation of the prisoners between the two countries?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Sir, I am sorry, I do not have the figures about numbers. But some of them, even those people, who had the valid documents, they have been pushed involuntarily by the Iranian Government into Pakistan. These are such cases who have not committed any crime. We are trying to give the details of all these and we are trying for their release and repatriation.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any estimate by us about the number of people who may be having valid passports but have crossed the border...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are repeating the question.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, kindly permit me to speak. There is a difference and I want to bring out the difference. Whereas in reply to the first question the Minister said some of the people were thrown in by the Iranian Government there may also be some fugitives who crossed over from this side. Is there any linkage between the terrorists and those who crossed from this side? That is the question I want to ask.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Were there any terrorists among those who crossed over?

SHRI B R. BHAGAT: Sir, these are old cases.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants the Minister to keep a tab on the movements of terrorists.

SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know from the hon Minister what is the number of Indian convicts in Pakistan who have completed their prison sentences but who are still there? I know the case of one Subhash Jain of Jammu who was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, which he completed five years back, but he is still in Pakistan. What steps are being taken for their release?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Sir if the hon. Member gives me the particulars of that particular individual, we shall take it up.

Installations of Medilas Yag Lasers in Army Hospitals

*222. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:†

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to acquire the latest Medilas Yag Lasers for surgery in army hospitals; and

(b) if so, what benefits are likely to result from the use of Yag lasers and by when these are likely to be installed?

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bir Bhadra Pratap Singh.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) and (b) It has been decided to procure two Yag (Yttrium Aluminium Garnet) Lasers for use in Service Hospitals. Laser surgery can be applied to control internal haemorrhage, to destroy tumours, etc. without subjecting the patient to severe operative procedures. It would take about a year for the equipment to be installed, after the model is selected and source of procurement is decided upon.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, according to my limited knowledge of medical science, I was mostly thinking that this is the latest method of bloodless surgery, but the reply has added two more uses of it, i.e., control of internal haemorrhage, and destroying of tumours. Now the question still remains about bloodless surgery; whether it is a fact that the laser surgery is more effective, safer and simpler than the conventional means of surgery, particularly in cancer cases as it greatly reduces the number of days that a patient has to spend in hospital? If so, will the Government constitute a top advisory committee to examine how more beds can be made available to patients by using laser and modern methods of surgery?

SHRI ARUN SINGH: Sir, there is no doubt that laser operative procedures are advanced over more traditional surgery methods. I am no more medically qualified than the hon. Member. I do, however, think, Sir, that there is a slight distinction between the word safer because the laser, is, to an extent, a double edged weapon. If it cuts more deep and if it is not controlled adequately in that process, then it can destroy more than it is intended to do. As far as the question of the Government setting up some kind of a committee or commission is concerned, I think that is beyond the purview of my Ministry.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Though the hon. Minister in his reply has said that it would take about a year for the equipment to be intsalled after the model is selected and source of procurement is decided upon, still may I know whether it is a fact that the application of laser technology with its multiple advantages has revolutionised the practice of surgery in the world and, if so, what steps have already been taken or are being proposed to make use of this laser technology for treatment in Army hospitals.

SHRI ARUN SINGH: There is no doubt that laser technology has contributed significantly to the improvement of surgical techniques. Medilas supplier of YAG type of laser is only one of the suppliers and, therefore, in response to the hon. Member's question whether we are going to procure Medilas Yag Lasers or not I would say it is a subject which will be determined by the DGS&D who are evaluating alternate suppliers, after obtaining the comments of the DG, AFMS.

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: The Minister has rightly said that Medilas Laser is the latest surgical machine used for bloodless surgery which gives better results in a short time. At present, the Cancer Institutes at Madras, Ahmedabad and Bombay are using Medilas Laser with great benefit to patients as the chances of recurrence of cancer are minimised if laser is used in surgery for cancer. In view of its importance, I want to know whether the Minister would assure this House that this technology would be used not only in military hospitals but in all the other Government hospitals also.

SHRI ARUN SINGH: I am in no position to give such an assurance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.